

**FY 2021-2022 Virginia Beach Budget  
Response to Council Questions**

**Question Number:** 94

**Question:** Can you please provide information on the level of hazard that Public Works and Public Utilities individuals encounter on a daily basis, especially during COVID-19?

**Date Requested:** 4/27/21

**Requested By:** Councilmember Wooten

**Department:** Public Utilities / Public Works

**Response:** Hazards exist with many aspects of city work. Bees, wasps, hornets, snakes, spiders, and dogs are among the insects, reptiles, and animals encountered. Other employees might encounter risk associated with heights, enclosed spaces, and high voltage electrical panels. Others come into close contact with wastewater, and many of our employees work in close proximity to heavy machinery, tools, and equipment. That said, none of these risks are unique to us in that all water and wastewater employees encounter the same risks within their respective utilities. We mitigate these risks by providing our members with various types of safety training, including fall protection, enclosed space entry, etc., and the use of protective personal equipment (PPE). With respect to COVID-19, our members mitigate risk through adherence of CDC guidelines for social distancing, enhanced cleaning and disinfection protocols, wearing masks, and following routine safety protocols when working with wastewater. Wastewater is subject to carrying the Coronavirus, as well as many other types of viruses and bacteria. Members routinely mitigate these risks by wearing appropriate PPE. The City has been proactive in working to provide every willing member with the opportunity to receive a COVID vaccination.